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INFO RUCNCLM/MCC CANDIDATE COUNTRY COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUEHDS/AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA PRIORITY 3083  
RUEHAE/AMEMBASSY ASMARA PRIORITY 0308  
RUEHJB/AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA PRIORITY 2439  
RUEHDJ/AMEMBASSY DJIBOUTI PRIORITY 0146  
RUEHKM/AMEMBASSY KAMPALA PRIORITY 2878  
RUEHKH/AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM PRIORITY 0036  
RUEHLGB/AMEMBASSY KIGALI PRIORITY 0876  
RUEHMS/AMEMBASSY MUSCAT PRIORITY 0025  
RUEHNR/AMEMBASSY NAIROBI PRIORITY 0383  
RUEHYN/AMEMBASSY SANAA PRIORITY 0064  
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RUEAWJA/DEPT OF JUSTICE WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY  
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RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC PRIORITY  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 DAR ES SALAAM 001835

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/15/2011

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [ELAB](#) [ECON](#) [PINR](#) [PTER](#) [KCRM](#) [SNAR](#)

TZ

SUBJECT: PRESIDENTIAL DISCONNECT ACROSS ZANZIBAR CHANNEL

REF: A. A. DAR ES 1433

[1](#)B. B. DAR ES 1495

Classified By: D. Purnell Delly, Deputy Chief of Mission, for reason 1.  
4 b.

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY. Zanzibari President, Abeid Amani Karume, raised the isles' political temperature on November 2 with his speech honoring the anniversary of the Chama Cha Mapinduzi's (CCM) 2005 electoral victory. In a public address at Zanzibar State House, Karume denied any political crisis on Zanzibar, rejected the idea of a coalition government, and called for Civic United Front (CUF) Secretary General and three-time CUF Presidential candidate, Maalim Seif Hamad, to resign his party leadership. These comments set off large CUF demonstrations in Zanzibar and in Dar es Salaam on November 11 and 12 respectively. While CUF leaders protested Karume's statements as incendiary, they also reaffirmed their trust in President Kikwete's leadership to resolve the political problems on Zanzibar. It is too early to say whether Karume's speech was a direct challenge to President Kikwete who, just a few weeks earlier, had visited Zanzibar and proclaimed progress toward reconciliation "at a good stage." What is clear is that CUF leaders see a split between Karume and Kikwete and they are hoping for and counting on Kikwete to prevail. END SUMMARY.

Karume Infuriates CUF...

[1](#)2. (U) On November 2, President Karume hosted a press conference, marking the one year anniversary of CCM's 2005 victory in Zanzibar's general elections. In this speech, Karume said there was no political standoff on Zanzibar and called the idea of a government of national unity "not practical and unconstitutional." Karume also advised Seif Sherif Hamad, Civic United Front (CUF) Secretary General, to resign, comparing him to football coach whose team lost year after year. Karume's remarks followed President Kikwete's

private visit to Zanzibar from October 17-22 and after Kikwete told editors of the Guardian newspaper that "efforts to tackle Zanzibar's political crisis have reached a good stage."

¶3. (C) Local press coverage of President Kikwete's Zanzibar trip was limited, focused mainly on his participation at an Iftar dinner at Zanzibar's State House on October 21. Juma Duni Haji, Deputy Secretary General of CUF on Zanzibar, told Poloff on November 14 that while Kikwete's Zanzibar visit was "silent" in the press, Kikwete had met with every level of CCM leadership to discuss the Zanzibar political situation. Haji emphasized the enormous leap forward: "President Kikwete is the first President to admit there is a problem on Zanzibar and that the Union President has a responsibility to solve it." While Kikwete did not meet with CUF leadership in Zanzibar, Haji stressed that CUF believed the visit signified Kikwete's commitment to breaking the impasse. "This is a 40 year old problem. We knew Kikwete couldn't talk to us right away, but his visit was the right step forward," Haji said.

...And Sparks Demonstrations.

¶4. (C) In response to Karume's statements, the Civic United Front (CUF) staged two demonstrations - November 11 in Unguja, Zanzibar and November 12 in Dar es Salaam. "The protests were a direct reaction to President Karume's inflammatory statements," Haji told Poloff. Seif Sherif Hamad led both demonstrations, calling for new elections on Zanzibar. (Note: Ibrahim Lipumba, CUF Party Chairman, was out of the country). According to Haji, CUF has a third demonstration planned for November 18 on Pemba Island. Haji explained that CUF's two main objectives for the

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demonstrations were: (i) to protest Karume's incendiary statements against Hamad and against a coalition government; and (ii) to show support for President Kikwete's efforts. According to the Guardian newspaper, and confirmed by Haji, Hamad urged CUF supporters not to take Karume's statements seriously and to wait for Kikwete to speak and explain his plan of action. "We are crying for Kikwete to speak out and let us know his thinking!" Haji exclaimed.

CUF Disconnect?

¶5. (U) At both rallies, Seif Sherif Hamad stressed CUF's demand for fresh elections on Zanzibar and explained that the party's pressing goal was a new election - not a government of national unity. Haji noted that if CUF were to win in a free and fair election, CUF would form a government of national unity. However, Hamad's call for fresh elections differed from Ibrahim Libumba's initial rejoinder to President Karume. Lipumba stressed the importance of a national unity government at his November 3 press conference, saying that "the issue of forming a national unity government had been discussed at high levels of both CUF and CCM parties," and that "the results of the 2005 election (CCM 53 percent; CUF 47 percent) made the formation of a coalition government inevitable."

CCM Disconnect?

¶6. (U) The local press has depicted President Karume's November 2 speech as a challenge to President Kikwete's reconciliation efforts on Zanzibar. On November 3 the Guardian contrasted President Karume's denial of a political crisis with President Kikwete's comment that "efforts to tackle Zanzibar's political crisis had reached a good stage." On November 4, the Citizen newspaper ran a front page article with photos of Kikwete and Karume with the following comments juxtaposed: "Kikwete- I can see an impasse; Karume: No rift in Zanzibar."

¶7. (C) Professor Lipumba, during his November 3 press conference, called Karume's denial of an impasse a clear

contradiction of President Kikwete's first national address in December 2005 (Ref A). Juma Duni Haji elaborated on Lipumba's remarks, emphasizing that Karume's speech not only aimed to frustrate and humiliate Seif Sherif Hamad, but amounted to a public betrayal of President Kikwete. Haji said, "Karume dishonored Kikwete as President and as CCM Party Chairman," adding that CUF found it surprising to see a "public tug of war" between Kikwete and Karume. "Usually, these disagreements are resolved internally and not revealed to the public. Something is different here. Something is fishy," Haji noted.

18. (C) Given signs of a public rift between Karume and Kikwete, Poloff asked if CUF leadership believed Kikwete had sufficient power to influence the political scene on Zanzibar. Haji emphasized that CUF trusted Kikwete and that Kikwete did have the power - as President, as Chairman of the CCM party, and Chairman of CCM's National Executive Committee. Haji noted that while CUF would not set a timeline for President Kikwete to act, the demonstrations served as a reminder of the dire situation and need for speedy action.

CUF Leadership: Hamad Still Standing

19. (C) In response to questions about Hamad's support base within CUF, Juma Duni Haji was emphatic: "Hamad is the most highly revered leader in Zanzibar and within CUF." He stressed that CUF supporters were frustrated with President Karume and CCM, but insisted that they were not unhappy with

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Hamad. Just as Juma Duni Haji would not suggest the slightest decline of CUF support for Hamad, he would not say that CUF leaders were losing their grip over the more frustrated and radical, youth wing (Ref B). Haji did say, however, that CUF leaders could tell their supporters to be patient only so long. He emphasized that nobody - neither CUF nor CCM - was happy with the economic situation on Zanzibar, estimating that more than 80 percent of youth were unemployed.

Comment: Karume Challenging Kikwete?

10. (C) Zanzibar's political controversy appears to be heating up again, with President Karume's public address fueling the fire. The apparent "rift" between President Kikwete and President Karume's public statements bears watching. After a two week trip to East Asia, Kikwete returned to the controversy on November 13; his next steps will reveal whether Karume's remarks reflect a challenge to his leadership and, if so, whether he will be able to rise to that challenge. Another disconnect which bears watching is within CUF's leadership circles. While Professor Lipumba's response to Karume focused on the need for a national unity government, Hamad's call was for fresh elections. The only unambiguous strategy CUF appears to have espoused is a "wait and see" strategy for what President Kikwete will do next.  
END COMMENT.  
RETZER